
Instructional Games and Simulations: Suitable Techniques for the Propagation of Igbo Traditions

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Abstract: *A tradition is a belief or behaviour passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning or special significance with origins in the past. The traditions of Igbo are unique and interesting. The Igbo people have preserved their traditions through centuries. Now, many of them are Christians yet their traditional beliefs are still deep and sincere. A number of factors can exacerbate the loss of tradition including industrialization, globalization and the assimilation or marginalization of specific cultural groups. In view of the above, this paper tries to examine the use of instructional games and simulations as suitable techniques for the propagation of Igbo traditions. However, this paper examines the following variables: theoretical framework, conceptualization of terms, the usefulness of instructional games and simulation in propagating Igbo traditions and a designed lesson topic on one of the Igbo traditions using instructional simulation technique. Finally, the paper concludes that instructional games and simulations are suitable techniques for the propagation of Igbo traditions and recommended among others that teachers should be allowed to gain practical experience through seminars, organized workshops and conferences.*

Keywords: *Instruction, Games, Simulations, Simulation games, Igbo traditions.*

Introduction

Instruction is a set of events that affect learners in such a way that learning is facilitated. Instruction may include events that are generated by a page of print, by a picture, by a television program or by a combination of physical objects, among other things (Gage, Briggs & Wager, 1992, p.3). According to Imogie (1988, p. 45), instruction “is the process whereby the environment of an individual is deliberately managed to enable him to learn, to emit or engage in specified behaviours under specific conditions or as responses to specified situations”. Objective guidance is the main purpose of instruction in education. Education is a process of socialization, enculturation and transmission of what is worthwhile to those who are committed to it, be they children or adults. It is also a process of developing knowledge ability in learner in such a way that they use this knowledge to improve themselves and their society (Federal Ministry of Education, 2007).

A tradition is a belief of behaviour passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning or special significance with origin in the past (Bankole, 2020). The Igbo traditions are interesting. These people have preserved their traditions through centuries. Today, many of them

are Christians yet their traditional beliefs are still deep and sincere. They possess the second rank among the tribes and ethnic groups in Nigeria by the population. They are not a single nation. They rather consist of many smaller groups of people who are united under the same language, culture and traditions. They have brought a lot of their cultural heritage through ages and also developed a lot in the modern times (Bankole, 2020). A number of factors can exacerbate the loss of tradition, including industrialization, globalization and the assimilation or marginalization of specific cultural groups. In response to this, concerted attempts are being made by Igbo people to preserve Igbo traditions from being neglected, endangered and near extinction. In the preservation of Igbo traditions, education plays a vital role. Education is a social enterprise and as such its aims and methods are socially determined or directed to achieve goals such as propagating its cultural and traditional values (Federal Ministry of Education, 2007).

One of the ways education can achieve the propagation of Igbo traditional values from one generation to the next is through the use of Instructional games and simulation in the teaching and learning of Igbo traditions both inside and outside the school systems. An instructional game is a form of a play designed as contest or competition with rules, procedures and played accordingly to teach or help learners acquire ideas, knowledge and skills (Onyejemezi, 1990). Similarly, Instructional Simulation is a representation or model of real – life situation (that is, a model of an object or of a process of a complex system) designed for a more serious educational purpose (Onyejemezi, 1990). Instructional simulation and games can individualize learning to match the pace, interests and capabilities of each particular student and contextualize learning in engaging virtual environments (National Academy of Sciences, 2020). Instructional simulation and game provide conditions for holistic learning. That is, through the modeling of reality and through the players' interactions as they strive to succeed, learners encounter a whole and dynamic view of the process being studied (Heinich, Molenda & Russell, 1993). The thrust of this work is the role of instructional games and simulation in the propagation of Igbo traditions from one generation to the next.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical base of this work stems from social constructivist approach. Piaget and Vygotsky were frequently cited as foundational influences on the development of this perspective. Piaget's work was interpreted and extended by Smorgansbord (1997). Social constructivist theory postulates that learners construct their own reality or at least interpret it based upon their perceptions of experiences, so an individual's knowledge is a function of one's prior experiences, mental structures and beliefs that are used to interpret objects and events". What some one knows is grounded in perception of the physical and social experiences which are comprehended by the mind (Jonasson, 1991). The assumptions of this theory are as follows:

- Knowledge is constructed from experience,
- Learning is a personal interpretation of the world,
- Learning is an active process in which meaning is developed on the basis of experience,
- Conceptual growth comes from the negotiation of meaning, the sharing of multiple perspectives and the changing of our internal representations through collaborative learning,
- Learning should be situated in realistic settings,
- Testing should be integrated with the task and not a separate activity (Smorgansbord, 1997).

Constructivism projected a vision of holism. It hearkened back to the era in which Bruner called for a learner-centered approach to meaningful learning. Perhaps most importantly for those in educational technology, it coincided with the new capabilities of digital media (Molenda, 2009).

Constructivism recommended instructional strategies that followed several broad principles:

- Enable learning in complex, realistic and relevant environments,
- Provide for social negotiation as an integral part of learning,
- Support multiple perspectives and the use of multiple modes of representation,
- Encourage ownership in learning,
- Nurture self-awareness of the knowledge construction process (Driscoll, 2005).

At least the first three of these principles lend themselves better to technology-based delivery than face-to-face conventional instruction. First, complex, realistic environments (or micro-worlds) can be created using simulation software. Second, e-mail, chat rooms and threaded discussions can facilitate social negotiation. Third, the World Wide Web platform enables designers to link pictures and moving animation chips to verbal presentations, all of which can be navigated according to individual needs and interests. This theory is suitable to this study because the instructional games and simulations are techniques that fit well with the principles of student-centered and constructivist learning and teaching. These instructional techniques can allow the implementation of augmented reality in virtual environments and promote the dissemination of traditional heritage to a wider public. Also, the use of simulations and games in education provide conceptual growth which comes from the negotiation of meaning, the sharing of multiple perspectives and the internal representation through collaborative learning. This work is supported by the theory of social constructivism, a philosophy that perceives learning as a process of adjusting mental models to accommodate new experiences, constructing knowledge, developing thinking skills, building learners' ability to reflect and generating strategies for defining a problem and working out solutions.

Conceptualization of Terms

Instructional Games

A game is an activity in which participants follow prescribed rules that differ from those of reality as they strive to attain a challenging goal. The distinction between play and reality is what makes games entertaining (Heinich, Molenda & Russell, 1993). Attaining the goal usually entails competition. The competition may be individual against individual, as in chess: group against group, as in basketball: or individual against a standard, as in golf (with "par" as the standard) (Heinich *et al.*, 1993). Games apart from the simulations they may incorporate provide a motivating framework for repetitive practice by adding a playful environment, reinforcement for correct practice (in the forms of points) and the excitement of surprise and suspense (Heinich *et al.*, 1993).

An instructional or educational game is a form of play designed as contest or competition with rules and procedures and played accordingly to teach or help learners acquire ideas, knowledge and skills (Onyejemezi, 1990). Play as free and enjoyable activity is an easy way of learning or of gaining meaningful knowledge of things, situation or people without strain (Onyejemezi, 1990). In games, winners are decided by skill, strength and sometimes luck or chance. Games do not imitate real life situations. They use real things such as base boards, cards, dice, bottle tops, well shaped wooden or plastic pieces, instructions or directives, questions and answers compiled with enjoyment in testing and achieving lesson objectives. During such games,

learners are challenged to think hard, take decisions, plan strategies, expect consequences or results of their actions and to put up with the results of such actions (Onyejemezi, 1990).

According to Wikipedia (2020), Educational games are “games explicitly designed with educational purposes or which have incidental or secondary educational value”. All types of games may be used in an educational environment. However, educational games are games that are designed to help people learn about certain subjects, expand concepts, reinforce development, understand a historical event or culture or assist them in learning a skill as they play. Game types include board, card and video games (Wikipedia, 2020). Game – based learning (instructional game technique) ranges from simple paper and pencil games like word searches all the way up to complex, massively multiplayer online (MMO) and role – playing games (Wikipedia, 2013). As educators, governments and parents realize the psychological need benefits that gaming has on learning; this educational technique has become mainstream. Games are interactive plays that teach us goals, rules, adaptation, problem solving and interaction, all represented as a story (Wikipedia, 2020).

Paul (2020) sees instructional games as Game-based teaching. According to him, game-based teaching or learning is a type of game play that has designed learning outcomes. Game-based learning is designed to balance subject matter with game play and the ability of the player to retain and apply said subject matter to the real world. Therefore, it can be said that play and learning are synonymous, leading to cognitive and emotional development inside a social and cultural context. Barab, Scoh, Siyahhan, Goldstone, Ingram-Goble, Zuiker & Warren (2009) see conceptual play as “a state of engagement that involves:

- Projection into the role of character who,
- Engaged in a partly frictional problem content,
- Must apply conceptual understandings to make sense of, and
- Ultimately transform the context.

The success of a game can be attributed to such factors as feedback, progress markers, engaging content, fantasy, competition, challenge, uncertainty, curiosity, control and other factors that involve cognition, emotions, motivation and art (Gee, 2003).

Merits of Instructional Games

Many advantages are gained from instructional games:

- Students need to learn by doing and with gaming, students can learn by doing something as a part of a larger community of people who share common goals and ways of achieving those common goals, making a benefit for social reasons as well.
- Gaming has also changed the look of content-driven media, people learn by being told and reflecting on what they are told. In gaming, game designers create digital environments and game levels that shape, facilitate and even teach problem solving. Games also teach students that failure is inevitable but not irrevocable. In school, failure is a big deal. In games, players can just start over from the last save. A low cost failure ensures that players will take risks, explore and try new things (Barab *at el.*, 2009).
- When properly designed, educational games can combine support for various learning styles including: verbal information provided in the form of digital games both verbally and textually; intellectual skill such as the use of concepts and rules to solve problems which form the basis of strategy game; cognitive strategies which is important to complete game tasks; attitude which is important cardinal for role-playing games and most games require the

use of some kind of controller or keypad which helps develop fine motor skills (Shaffer, Squire, Halverson & Gee, 2005).

- Educational games satisfy our fundamental need to learn by providing enjoyment, passionate involvement, structure, motivation, ego gratification, adrenaline, creativity, social interaction and emotion in the game itself while the learning takes place (Wikipedia, 2020).
- Games often have a fantasy element that engages players in a learning activity through narrative or storylines. Educational video games can motivate children and allow them to develop an awareness of consequentiality. Children are allowed to express themselves as individuals while learning and engaging in social issues.
- Today's games are more social with most teens playing games with others at least some of the time and can incorporate many aspects of civic and political life (Lenhart, 2009).
- There appears to be a close association between play and learning. Computer games enhance learning through visualization, experimentation and creativity of play and often include problems that develop critical thinking. Problems that develop critical thinking is the analysis and evaluation of information in order to determine logical steps that lead to concrete conclusions (Betz, 1995). Visualization, a key cognitive strategy, plays an important role in discovery and problem solving (Rieber, 1995). Sekule & Blake (1994) state that our sense of vision represents our diverse source of information of the world around us. Visualization therefore, has tremendous value in computer games. Leutner (1993) argues that manipulation of objects stimulates learning and training while Neal (1990) proposes that goal formation and competition are inherently motivating components.
- The use of collaborative game-based role-play for learning provides an opportunity for learners to apply acquired knowledge and to experiment and get feedback in the form of consequences or rewards thus getting the experiences in the "safe virtual world" (Paul, 2020).
- The success of game-based-learning technique owes to active participation and interaction being at the centre of the experience and signals that current educational methods are not engaging students (Green & Bavelier, 2012).
- The power that games afford is in the ability not only to stimulate the imagination but to do so in an amazing complex, profound and vivid way. By tying that notion of vivid conceptual, blending and imagination to an understanding of enculturation and shared practice, it is believed that Multiplayers Online Games (MMOG) provide a valuable space to help both educators and students alike understand the implications and possibilities for extending the literary mind. The power of the play of imagination is in its ability to break traditional frames and dichotomies and allow us to explore a space where fantasy and play are no longer subordinated to reality and work and where we are able to find richer ways of identifying with the other. The ability to play imaginatively and see and experience from many different vantage, rather than just one, provides a new set of tools of imaginative and innovative thinking (Douglas & Brown, 2007).

Instructional Simulation

A simulation is an abstraction or simplification of some real-life situation or process. In simulation, participants usually play a role that involves them in interactions with other people or with elements of the simulated environment. According to Wikipedia (2019), a simulation is an approximate imitation of the operation of a process or system that represents its operation overtime. Simulation can be used to show the eventual real effects of alternative conditions and

courses of action. Simulation is also used when the real system cannot be engaged, because it may not be accessible or it may be dangerous or unacceptable to engage or it is being designed but not built or it may simply not exist. Key issues in simulation include the acquisition of valid source information about the relevant selection of key characteristics and behaviours, the use of simplifying approximations and assumptions within the simulations, fidelity and validity of the simulation outcomes (Wikipedia, 2019).

Simulation is that type of play which imitates or copies closely the appearance, conduct and other aspects of the real world in the safety of secure environment. It is a feigned version or invented model or representation of reality. Children freely simulate many aspects of the environment through role playing and gaming when they climb trees, fly aeroplanes, build houses, be rich or poor, old or young, male or female, a carpenter, a trader, a chief, a teacher or even play an animal. In so doing, they experiment and develop structures of knowledge that allow them get along in the world. The fact that children learn meaningfully through simulation resulted in the use of this technique at all levels of education and training and in any field of study it is found to be suitable (Onyejemezi, 1990). An instructional or educational simulation is therefore a representation or model of real-life situations designed for a more serious educational purpose. Such educational purposes include: helping learners to learn about life experiences and the world by active participation either in role-playing various kinds of possible events or in operating a model. Simulation emphasizes experiencing. In simulation, there is no winner as in games but merely a changed situation through which an educational objective is to be achieved by the participants through actual experiencing (Onyejemezi, 1990).

Following are examples of instructional simulations or simulated scenes found to be useful in the Nigerian Primary Schools:

1. The Family Unit
2. Good Neighbourliness
3. Chiefs, Obas, Serikis, Amanyabos
4. Cooking and Meal Sewing
5. Local Tradition e.g. Marriage Ceremony (Onyejemezi, 1990).

According to Wikipedia (2019), “an instructional simulation also called an educational simulation, is a simulation of some type of reality (system or environment) but which also includes instructional elements that help a learner explore, navigate or obtain more information about that system or environment that can generally be acquired from mere experimentation”. Wikipedia (2019) defines simulations as interactions between people such as role-playing. Aldrich (2003) & Gibbons (2001) suggest that experiential learning activities like those found in team training or ropes courses are also simulations because they replicate the human decision-making process, groups may display, albeit in a very different environment. These can be considered instructional simulations because the effective use of these simulation type include using instructional elements to help learners focus on key behaviours, concepts or principles. Similarly, Lateef (2009) states that simulation is a technique for practice and learning that can be applied to many different disciplines and trainees. It is a technique to replace and amplify real experiences with guided ones, often “Immersive” in nature of the real world in a fully interactive fashion. Simulation-based training techniques, tools and strategies can be applied in designing structured learning experiences, as well as be used as a measurement tool linked to targeted team work competencies and learning objectives.

However, Akilli (2007) states that simulations are instructional scenarios where the learner is placed in a “world” defined by the teacher. They represented a reality within which students interact. The teacher controls the parameters of the “world” and uses it to achieve the desired instructional results. Students experience the reality of scenario and gather meaning from it. A simulation is a form of experiential learning. It is a strategy that fits well with the principles of student centered and constructivist learning and teaching. Simulation takes a number of forms. They may contain elements of

- A game (Simulation game)
- A role – play or
- An activity that acts as a metaphor.

Simulations are characterized by their non-linear nature and by their controlled ambiguity within which students must make decisions. The inventiveness and commitment of the participants usually determines the success of a simulation (Akilli, 2007).

Merits of Instructional Simulations

The following advantages are inherent in instructional simulations:

- Simulations promote the use of critical and evaluative thinking. Because they are ambiguous or open-ended, they encourage students to contemplate the implications of a scenario. The situation feel real and thus leads to more engaging interaction by learners.
- Simulations promote concept attainment through experiential practice. They help students understand the nuances of a concept. Students often find them more deeply engaging than other activities as they experience the activity first-hand, rather than hearing about it or seeing it.
- Simulations help students appreciate more deeply the management of the environment, politics, community, culture and traditions. For example, participating in a resource distribution activity, students might gain an understanding of inequity in society.
- Simulations can reinforce other skills indirectly, such as debating, a method associated with some large-scale simulations and research skills (Akilli, 2007).
- Simulation technique helps in linking theory with practice of teaching.
- Simulation helps in developing social skills like social manners and etiquettes among the students.
- There is self-monitoring in simulated-training. It reinforces the students for the desired behaviour (Cruick, 2020).
- Simulation is learner friendly. One of the primary reasons behind organizations considering using learning simulations in the past few years has been its user-friendly interface. Simulations mimic the real world environment. It makes the learner feel at ‘home’. He or she can practice without any fear of causing actual damage. If the learners fail, he can try any number of times until he succeeds. Learning from one’s mistakes is one of the best ways to retain knowledge (Ohio, 2018).
- Instructional Simulations accelerate and compress time to offer a foresight of a hazy future. They are experimental, experiential and rigorous. They promote creativity among the participants who develop a shared view of their learning and behaviours. Above all, making decisions have no real-life cost implications (Dumlekar, 2004).

Instructional Simulation Games

A simulation game combines the attributes of a simulation (role playing, a model of reality) with

the attributes of a game (striving towards a goal, specific rules). Like a simulation, it may be relatively high or low in its modeling of reality, like a game, it may or may not entail competition (Heinich et al., 1993). According to Edutechwiki (2019), simulation game refers to a series of instructional designs that use elements from simulation and gaming. Simulation game can be done with board games, computer assisted board games or fully computerized environments. When some elements or characteristics of games and simulation are combined in an educational exercise, we have the third type of play namely Simulation Games or Exercise. A simulation game combines decision making, model of parts or elements of real life and includes clearly specified rules for interaction and the competition. This type of exercise is usually designed to develop specific skills or sub-skills which are required to perform in real life situations (Onyejemezi, 1990).

Similarly, because simulation games combine the characteristics of both simulations and games, they have advantages and applications in common with both formats. In this regard one of the major reasons for using simulation games methods is that they provide conditions for holistic learning (Heinich et al, 1993). That is, through the modeling of reality and through the players' interactions as they strive to succeed, learners encounter a whole dynamic view of the process being studied. In addition, our emotions come into play along with the thinking process. Participants commonly experience excitement, elation, disappointment even anger as they struggle to succeed. Dumblekar (2004) defines simulation game in its broadest meaning to encompass such area as simulation, computerized simulation, internet simulation, gaming, simulation/gaming, serious games, educational games, training games, e-games, internet games, video games, policy exercises, day-in-the-life simulations, planning exercises, debriefing, analytic discussion, post-experience analysis, modeling, virtual reality, game theory, role-play, role-playing, play, active learning, experiential learning, learning from experience, toys, augmented reality, playthings, structured exercise, alternative purpose games, digital game-based learning and immersive learning.

Merits of Simulation Games

The following are the merits of simulation games:

- Simulation game technique provides conditions for holistic learning. That is, through the modeling of reality and through the players' interactions as they strive to succeed, learners encounter a whole and dynamic view of the process being studied (Heinich et al., 1993).
- Educational simulation games have been found to be effective in motivating students to learn and engaging to students (Papastergiou, 2009).
- Some simulation games allow students to explore and create materials that they could not work directly with in real life. For example, chemsense provides an environment in which students can explore chemical processes and see the effects of changes. These open environments can also help students to correct errors and misconceptions in their thinking by allowing them to test out hypotheses. Simulation can enable students to develop familiarity with an activity before they engage in it (Ronen & Ehiahu, 2000).

Onyejemezi (1990, p.140) articulates the following merits:

- Both normal, gifted and handicapped children as well as adults learn from simulation games.
- Simulation games provide opportunities for learners to enjoy meaningful learning through active participation.

- Simulation approach emphasizes experiencing and experimenting as opposed to simply being taught. In this regard, simulation games provide learners with experiences and practice which are much closer to real-life situations they will encounter.
- They provide safe grounds for experimenting with dangerous or very expensive objects or situations.
- Children easily and quickly volunteer to take part in class games and simulations.
- Timid pupils easily open up and interact freely with others as the atmosphere is usually less tense and less fearful. Children act without reservations in class games and simulations.
- Children easily co-operate in simulation games and through the roles they play acquire or develop self-confidence as they learn to work as a team and to lead others.
- Children develop their imaginative and creative powers and apply previously acquired knowledge when they try to get out of difficult situations in simulated and games scenes.

In addition to the above, Cannon-Bowers and Bowers (2009) postulate that simulation and games offer a number of advantages as compared to more traditional forms of training because they:

- Can be used as practice environments for tasks that are too dangerous to be practiced in the real world.
- Can provide increased opportunities for practice on task that occur infrequently (e.g., emergency procedures).
- Can contain embedded instructional features (e.g., feedback) that enhance the instructional experience and
- Can represent significant cost savings compared with training on operational equipment.

Considerable interest has been generated in electronic simulations and games for education as least in parts because of the obvious enthusiasm with which many children and adults currently play with them. Individuals interact with simulations and games in a variety of different contents, comprised of interrelated physical, social, cultural and technological dimensions. These contexts influence the extent of interaction with simulations and games and whether and to what extent, these interactions support learning. They can individualize learning to match the pace, interests and contextualize learning in engaging virtual environments (National Academy of Science, 2020).

Igbo Tradition

The English word tradition comes from a Latin word *traditio* meaning to transmit, to hand over and to give for safekeeping. It was originally used in Roman law to refer to the concept of legal transfers and inheritance (Shils, 2006). According to Hobsbawm (1992), tradition refers to “beliefs, objects or customs performed or believed in the past, originating in it, transmitted through time by being taught by one generation to the next and are performed or believed in the past”. Tradition can also refer to beliefs or customs that are prehistoric, with lost or arcane origins, existing from time immemorial (Olin, 2020). Originally, traditions were passed orally, without the need for a written system. Tools to aid this process include poetic devices such as rhyme and alliteration. The stories thus preserved are also referred to as tradition or as part of oral tradition. Even such traditions, however are presumed to have originated at some point (Shils, 2006). Traditions are often presumed to be ancient, unalterable and deeply important, though they may sometimes be much less “natural” than is presumed (Hobsbawm, 1992).

Traditions may also be adapted to suit the needs of the day and the changes can become

accepted as a part of the ancient tradition (Shils, 2006). Many objects, beliefs and customs can be traditional. Rituals of social interaction can be traditional with phrases and gestures such as saying “thank you”, sending birth announcements and greeting cards (Hobsbawm, 1992). Tradition can also refer to large concepts practices by groups (family traditions at Christmas), organizations (company’s picnic) or societies, such as the practice of national and public holidays. Tradition can also include material objects, such as buildings, works of art or tools. Tradition is often used as an adjective, in contexts such as traditional music, traditional medicine, traditional values and so on. In such constructions, tradition refers to specific values and materials particular to the discussed context, passed through generation (Shils, 2006).

The traditions of Igbo are unique and interesting. The traditional beliefs of the Igbos are deep and sincere. The roots of the Igbo origin are traced by back to the ancient personalities like Gad, one of the sons of Jacob and Eri, one of the sons of Gad himself. Anyway, the relics and artifacts revealed by scientists show from the scientific point of view that the traditions and customs of Igbo is one of the most ancient in Africa (Bankole, 2020). Today, the Ibos possess the second rank among the tribes and ethnic groups in Nigeria by the population. Just like Yoruba, for example, they are not a single nation. They rather consist of many smaller groups of people who are united under the same language, culture and traditions. They have brought a lot of their traditional heritage through ages and also developed a lot in the modern times. They are skilled in music and dancing; they have bright characteristics attire and create many samples of diverse visual arts. They have different dialects but the same language, they are ready to share their inner world but it doesn’t become smaller (Bankole, 2020).

There are certain ancient traditions in the Igbo land that are quite interesting to modern people and need to be preserved. Let us take a look at some of them and their genuine meaning:

The Igbo Traditional Marriage (Igba Nkwu)

The traditional marriage of the Ibos are deemed very festive, colourful and are divided into four main parts: Marriage inquiry known as ‘iku aka’ or ‘Iju ese’, seeking consent from the bride-to-be’s extended family known traditionally as ‘Umunna’, Bride price negotiation and payment known as ‘Ime ego’, wine-carrying ceremony by the bride known as ‘Igba Nkwu Nwayi’ and ‘Idu uno’. All these must be completed and the bride’s people must be satisfied before the groom can take away his new wife home.

a. Marriage inquiry known as ‘Iku aka or ‘Iju ese’

The first step of the Igbo traditional wedding rites is the groom visiting the bride’s immediate family accompanied by his father or the eldest member of his family if his dad is deceased. Usually, they are meant to show up empty handed because ‘Iku aka’ or ‘Iju ese’ simply means ‘coming to knock or inquire’ but groom and his family are free to take some hot drinks and kola nut as goodwill. The groom’s father does the taking; he introduces himself to the bride’s parents or guardian and explains the purpose of his visit. He officially announces his son’s interest in marrying their daughter. The bride-to-be is then called out by her parents and asked if she knows her suitor and would want to marry. Her response then determines if they would proceed to telling the extended family and the bride price negotiation.

b. Seeking consent from the bride-to-be’s extended family known traditionally as ‘Umunna’

After the first visit, the bride’s family begins investigation on the groom’s family, check their

background and history. This investigation also determines the progress of the next meeting between both families as the bride's people will then decide if the groom-to-be is good enough to take care of their daughter and their future children. It is assumed that groom's family must have carried out similar investigation prior to the first visit. The next meeting will be between the groom's family and the bride's extended family popularly known as Umunna. This meeting is important because the groom's people have to restate their interest in marrying from their family, they first have to give the groom their consent and the bride gives the final consent, dates for the traditional wedding will be set and bride price list will be sent out. In Igboland, tradition states that the groom take a few gifts along (such as kola nuts, palm wine, beer, soft drinks, tobacco, snuff and a goat). These will be shared between the groom and bride's families.

c. Bride price negotiation and payment known as 'Ime ego'

After the second visit and consent has been given by the bride's extended family, the groom's family can now proceed with the bride price negotiation and payment known traditionally as 'Ime ego', the groom's family ask for the engagement gifts list, this differs slightly from place to place in Igboland. The money paid for the bride price is significantly small and it is not an indication of the bride's worth. The extra gifts to be brought make up the larger part of the bride price. The groom's family then presents all they have brought to the bride's family on an agreed date or on the day of the wine-carrying ceremony. 'Ime ego' can be a hectic process between both families with a lot of begging from the groom's side and a lot of bragging from the bride's side. The bride's family starts to list their daughter's accomplishments and what the groom-to-be will gain by marrying her. There are going to be lots of back and forth between both families till a set amount is reached.

d. Wine-carrying ceremony by the bride known as 'Igba Nkwu Nwayi'

This is the last and final rite done by the groom's family. After the date for the official wine carrying has been set, the ceremony is done at the bride's home. Her family prepares a large feast (depending on their pockets) for the groom's family coming and invited guests. They also hire a live band and maybe traditional dancers to make the ceremony interesting. Usually, the bride-to-be is dressed in the traditional Igbo wedding attire which include a blouse, a double wrapper, a red coral bead necklace and a big head tie known as 'Ichafu' or a bead round her head. The groom is expected to be accompanied by a larger party this time and bring along with him the bride price list. He must present the list along with the required gifts to the Umunna before the ceremony begins. The highlight of Igba Nkwu Nwayi is when the bride in public points out the man she wants to marry. During the ceremony, the bride will be asked to give palm wine to her husband, which she will do while kneeling down. The parents and elders in the family of both the bride and groom will pray for the newlyweds and for the success of their marriage. After words, the bride and groom will dance along with their family members. When the ceremony is over, the bride will go home with the family of the groom signifying that the two are now husband and wife.

In some communities in Igboland, "Idu Uno" is practiced. Idu Uno is when the family of the bride officially goes and visits the home where their daughter will be living. The bride's family buys cooking utensils, bed-sheets, boxes, sewing machine, bed, pillow cases, plates, clothes and so on. Also, the bride's family along with their extended families sets a date to visit the couple with all the goods they bought. On "Idu Uno" day, the wife's family will give

the newly married couple all the things they bought for them. Marriage ceremonies in Igboland can be a long and expensive undertaking, but they are usually worth every kobo (Okonkwo, 2019 & Eface, 2015).

Oji (Kola-nut) ceremony

The Oji (Kola-nut) ceremony is among the things which the Ibos deem very important. This nut, though not pleasant to the taste, is very much in evidence on social occasions. It is shared among friends as a token of goodwill and is offered to a visitor as a sign of appreciation for his coming. When the Kola-nut is brought, the ceremony is performed by the oldest person present and he carries out what is called 'igo ofo'. This may consist in blessing the Kola as well as the person who provided it in giving thanks to their ancestor and in wishing those present good fortunes. After this, the person performing the igo ofo splits the nut and it is shared among all those present. Kola plays an important part in marriages and sacrifices. Old men believe that it helps them to bear the pangs of hunger when food is not available. In a wider sense of the word, oji is a present from one person to another, particular as an acknowledgement of favours received (Oraifite, 2020).

Omu Nkwu (Palm tree shoot) – Igbo tradition

Omu nkwu is used as a receptacle for things offered as a sacrifice. It is supposed to be able to purify a town from any crime committed or any sacrilegious act. It may be kept as an indication that a certain object must not be tampered with. It is used to show that which is sacred or very dangerous. A victor in battle or any performer of an outstanding feat of strength has "Omu nkwu" tied round his neck during an important celebration to show his bravery. If there are two rival tribes or if the inhabitants of two towns are so opposed to one another that fighting must ensue when a group of one meets a group belonging to the other: it becomes necessary that a representative of another Igbo community, passing through the rival towns, should hold the young "omu" as a token of goodwill and innocence. During funeral ceremonies, omu is tied round the drum and musical instruments as well as on the corpse, as a token of sanctity. It is also used in fastening mats to the roof of a house (Oraifite, 2020).

Igbo people are also famous for their architecture, wood carving skills and their talent for drawing traditional ornaments called Uri or Uli. The latter is more often done by women who practice it on their own bodies before some festive events in their settlements. Such decorative paintings are usually created under some momentary inspiration though there are certain traditional elements that depict plants, diverse objects. Sometimes, similar patterns appear on the walls of Igbo houses too.

Before the colonization, the only clothes that could be seen on both men and women were wrappers decorated with beads. Men also used loin clothes that could be worn alone or under a wrapper. Women never covered their chests and only wore necklaces and beads. Today, when they are into getting dressed in a traditional style, men usually wear Isiagu, a top with embroidery on the chest, paired with pants. They also cover their heads with traditional hats called "Okpu Agu". Women have their own attire, a blouse with voluminous sleeves and two wrappers (Bankole, 2020). Well, now you have an idea of how much there is of the ancient traditions of Igbo in everyday life. They still conduct ancient rites, still cherish the heritage of their ancestors. Even seeing the modern world around them, even having experienced the power of colonization, they have remained themselves.

The role of Instructional games and simulations in the propagation of the Igbo traditions

Instructional games and simulations have great potential to improve Igbo traditional learning in our elementary, secondary and tertiary classrooms. Igbo tradition as a body of ideas and knowledge can only be assimilated through learning. Instructional games and simulations whether formal or informal provide opportunities for individuals to learn the tradition of the Ibos. There appear to be a close association between play and learning. Playing games is an important part of our social and mental development. Rieber (1996) argues that play, especially during early childhood, performs important role in psychological, social and intellectual development and is a voluntary activity that is intrinsically motivating: involves some level of activity and often possess make-believe qualities. Learning that is fun appears to be more effective (Lepper & Cordova, 1992).

Simulation games enhance learning, visualization, experimentation and creativity of play and often include problems that develop critical thinking which was defined as the analysis and evaluation of information in order to determine logical steps that lead to concrete conclusions (Betz, 1995). Simulation games provides conditions for holistic learning that is, through the modeling of reality and through the players' interactions as they strive to succeed, learners encounter a whole and dynamic view of the process being studied. The success of simulation game-based-learning technique owes to active participation and interaction being at the centre of the experience and signals that current educational methods are not engaging students (Green & Bavelier, 2012). Instructional simulations and games in the classroom for the teaching and learning of Igbo traditions such as: traditional marriage (How it is done in Igbo land), Oji ceremony (How it is done in Igbo land), masks, masquerades and so on will lead to lessons objectives being fully achieved because of students active participations in the plays. Interactions with each other provide an opportunity of acquiring skills and knowledge which could be translated into meaningful disposition in the physical world. Also, through role-playing students acquire or develop self confidence as they learn to work as a team and to lead others.

Using instructional simulations and games in the classroom for the teaching and learning Igbo traditions will make students become more refined and enlightened in their tradition than their parents or forefathers. Simulation game promotes concept attainment through experiential practice. They help students understand the nuances of a concept. Students often find them more deeply engaging than other activities as they experience the activity first-hand, rather than hearing about it or seeing it. This leads to greater retention. One of the primary reasons behind considering using instructional simulations and games in learning Igbo traditions has been their user-friendly interface. Simulations mimic the real world environment. It makes the learner feel at 'home'. He or she can practice without any fear of causing actual damage. If the learners fail, he can try any number of times until he succeeds. Learning from one's mistakes is one of the best ways to retain knowledge.

Simulations and games when properly designed for teaching and learning of Igbo traditions can allow the learner some control over the pacing and content of the learning. This and other features provide the possibility of individualizing learning to match each learner's unique needs, strengths and weaknesses (National Academy of Sciences, 2020). Both normal, gifted and handicapped children as well as adults learn from them. Similarly, for instructional purposes, competition of the individual or team against a given standard is often the safest approach. It allows individualization because different standards can be set for different players. In fact, one of the most effective standards can be the students own past performance, the goal

being to raise the level of aspiration continually (Heinich *et al.*, 1993).

Basic skills such as sequence, sense of direction, visual perception, number concepts and following rules can be developed by means of games & simulations by the Igbo children in the school. For example, the Igbo new yam festival (Iwaji) can be simulated in the classroom by teacher and the students. Also Igbo traditional crops and their traditional significance can be taught in the class with Card Games. Games and simulations can similarly engage learners, whether at home, in school or in after-school programmes thereby increasing their motivational and retentive levels. Once skills, ideas and knowledge acquired are retained, they can easily be transmitted. This helps to guarantee continuity.

An example of instructional simulation in teaching and learning of Igbo traditions using Instructional Games and Simulations effectively

To be effective, instructional games, simulations or simulation games must be appropriate for the topics being studied; properly utilized and lead to the achievement of instructional objectives. The following steps are found to be helpful as means of ensuring the effective use of instructional games and simulations in teaching and learning:

- i. The finished simulation exercise or game should be played as part of an overall lesson dealing with the subject matter contained in the simulation or game. The teacher should have a lesson introducing the area of study – a lesson that leads into the game: a day before or same day.
- ii. Before the game or simulation is actually played, a brief introduction to it is given. Expectations of participants are explained.
- iii. The game/simulation could be properly explained to a group in the class say a group of about 6 who in fact will help in playing the game for the large group (the class).
- iv. While the play is going on, the teacher acts as a guide and resource person: answering questions and providing any necessary suggestions.
- v. Finally, the game or simulation is discussed in terms of the objectives it was designed to teach.

The teacher gets the participants to intellectualize or verbalize exactly what they have learnt from the activity. Verbalization will reinforce what has been learnt.

An example of instructional simulation in Igbo lesson.

- i. Subject: Igbo
- ii. Study Unit: Igbo traditions
- iii. Lesson Topic: Igbo traditional marriage
- iv. Class: SS1
- v. Age: 15 – 16 years
- vi. Time: Double period (2 hours)

Instructional Technique: Simulation

Instructional Objectives: By the end of the lesson, the students should be able to:

- i. mention five processes involve in Igbo traditional marriage.
- ii. state some of the articles use in the five stages of Igbo traditional marriage.
- iii. state two importance of marriage inquiry known as 'Iku aka' or 'Iju ese'.

- iv. describe five processes involve in Igbo traditional marriage.
- v. differentiate between Igba Nkwu Nwanyi (wine-carrying ceremony) and idu uno.

Rationale:

This simulated Igbo traditional marriage is designed to give students the opportunity to experience activities involve in Igbo traditional marriage.

Entering Behaviour:

Most students have a least verbal understanding of the term “Igbo traditional marriage”. All the students have attended a wine-carrying ceremony of couples before.

Group Size: The whole class should participate. The class should split up into two groups. The groups can form ‘families’ for acting the roles.

Roles to be acted:

- a. The bride-to-be,
- b. The groom,
- c. The groom’s parents,
- d. The bride-to-be parents,
- e. The bride’s extended family (Umunna),
- f. The groom’s extended family,
- g. The invited guest.

The role of the guide will be played by the teacher.

Instructional Materials Needed:

- i. Two corners for the two ‘families’ or sets of actors.
- ii. The commodities. These should comprise of :
 - a. Articles for marriage inquiry (Iku aka or Iju ese): hot drinks, palm wine and Kola nut (Oji).
 - b. Articles for seeking consent from bride-to-be’s extended family (Umunna): Kola nuts, Palm wine, beer, soft drinks, tobacco, snuff.
 - c. Articles for Bride price negotiation and payment (Ime ego): Palm wine and Kola nut.
 - d. Articles for Wine-carrying ceremony (Igba Nkwu Nwanyi): Cash gift, palm wine, Kola nuts, packets of cigarette, bags of rice (on a chart), tubers of yam, create of soft drinks, stockfish, bundles of Georges/Hollandis wrappers (all of these in a flip chart), shoes and jewellery and a goat (on a chart).
 - e. Articles for Idu Uno: cooking utensils, bed sheets, boxes, sewing machine, bed, pillow, pillow cases, plates and clothes (all of these in a flip chart).

Learning activity:

- Marriage inquiry
- Seeking consent from bride-to-be’s extended family (Umunna)
- Bride price negotiation and payment (Ime ego)
- Wine-carrying ceremony (Igba Nkwu Nwanyi)
- Idu Uno

Instructional Procedure:

- Step 1: Introduction of the simulation and explanation of the expectation of participants by the teacher. The teacher should make sure that the real world terminologies be used whenever possible.
- Step 2: The teacher with the help of the students should organize two corners for the two families or groups. The teacher also should identify the actors: the bride-to-be parents, the bride's extended family (Umunna), the groom's extended family and the invited guest.
- Step 3: the teacher acting as a guide leads the groom and the father through the process of marriage inquiry known as 'Iku aka or Iju ese'. Articles involve are: Kola nut, palm wine.
- Step 4: the teacher leads the groom's family to the process of seeking consent from the bride-to-be's family. Before this visit, both families must have concluded their investigations. This meeting is important because the groom's people have to restate their interest in marrying from the bride's family and the bride also gives her final consent. In this meeting they collected price list and date for carrying wine ceremony (Igba Nkwa Nwanyi). Articles involve are: Palm wine, hot drinks and Kola nut (Oji).
- Step 5: the teacher acting as a guide leads the groom's family to the bride's extended family for the process of Bride price negotiation and payment (ime ego). 'Ime ego' can be a hectic process between both families with a lot of begging from the groom's side. This bidding will continue until equilibrium price is reached (A small amount indeed). The groom's family may decide to pay that day or during wine-carrying ceremony.
- Step 6: The teacher leads the groom's family and the invited guest to the bride's family through the process of wine-carrying ceremony (Igba Nkwa Nwanyi). This is the last thing that will be done and the groom takes his wife home. The groom is expected to be accompanied by a larger party this time and bring along with him the articles in the price list and bride's price. After presenting the required gifts and bride's price to the Umunna the 'Igba Nkwa Nwanyi' starts. The highlight of 'Igba Nkwa Nwanyi' is when the bride in public points out the man she wants to marry.
- Step 7: The teacher acting as a guide leads the bride's (wife) family to the groom's family through the process of 'Idu Uno'. The process involves the bride's family visiting their daughter's place for the first time to know their place. They go along with their relations and the things that their in-law and his wife will use to start life.

Evaluation and Revision:

- Step 1: At the end of the activity, the teacher should call time out and gather the students together.
- First, to get the participants intellectualized or verbalized exactly what they have learned from the activity, the teacher asks the following questions:
 - What conclusions can you draw from your experience of the play?
 - What elements of reality were missing from or downplayed in the simulation play?
 - Did the simulation play change any of your previous opinions about Igbo traditional marriage?

After the student's responses, the teacher should jog their memories by citing some specific incidents or statements that he observed during the play.

Step 2: Next, the teacher focuses on the main objectives of the exercise, asking:

1. Mention five stages involve in Igbo traditional marriage.
2. State some of the articles used in the various five stages of Igbo traditional marriage.
3. State two importance of marriage inquiry known as 'Iku aka' or 'Iju ese'.
4. Describe five stages involve in Igbo traditional marriage.
5. Differentiate between Igba Nkwu Nwanyi (Wine-carrying ceremony) and Idu Uno.

Step 3: the teacher during the discussion takes note of those students who still do not seem to have a firm grasp of the objectives. During the next day's follow-up projects he has them play the simulation again along with a few of the average and superior performers as a remedial exercise.

Conclusion

Tradition refers to beliefs, objects or customs performed or believed in the past, originating in it, transmitted through time by being taught by one generation to the next and are performed or believed in the present. The Igbo people have preserved their tradition through centuries. Today, many of them are Christians yet their traditional beliefs are still deep and sincere. A number of factors can exacerbate the loss of tradition, including industrialization, globalization and the assimilation or marginalization of specific cultural groups. In response to this, concerted attempts are being made by Igbo people to preserve Igbo traditions from being neglected, endangered and near extinction. In the preservation of Igbo traditions, education places a vital role.

One of the ways education can achieve the propagation of Igbo traditions from one generation to the next is through the use of instructional games and simulations in the teaching and learning of Igbo traditions both inside and outside the school system. Simulation and games have great potential to individualize learning to match the pace, interests and capabilities of each particular student and contextualize learning in engaging virtual environments.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. The teachers should be allowed to gain practical experience through seminars, organized workshops and conferences. Some simulations and games activities depend heavily on postgame discussion for their full instructional effect. This debriefing must be skillfully planned and conducted. If the instructor lacks discussion leading skills, the whole learning experience is diminished.
2. Government should increase finding for the procurement of relevant instructional materials in our schools. The use of simulations and games materials usually demands a lot of money. Obtaining all the needed materials can be expensive and time consuming. Sometimes, cost can be kept down by making local modifications, for example, altering the procedures so that consumable materials are not consumed.
3. More time should be allocated to games and simulations lessons in the school timetable. Discovery learning is more time-consuming than straightforward lectures or reading assignments. A principle that can be stated in a single sentence might require an hour of play plus discussion to be conveyed experimentally.
4. Schools should host clubs and other organizations that provide opportunities for learning informally with simulations or games.
5. The government should as a matter of necessity integrate instructional games and simulations into Igbo traditional instruction by using the following design principles:

- Providing learners with systematic guidance to develop more complex ideas including scaffolds (tools to help children do something they could not do without assistance) for both content and inquiry reasoning.
- Allowing learners to systematically revisit and deepening their understandings.
- Engage learners in data gathering, modeling and sharing.
- Supporting social construction of knowledge among learning.
- Engage learners in role playing.

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